



Wonder-Woman-friendly curry



Chaz

 [cvillette](https://cvillette.livejournal.com/)

<https://cvillette.livejournal.com/>
2008-01-21 09:29:00

MOOD: 😊 grateful

MUSIC: New Order - Love Vigilantes

So I have this vegetarian friend. This is a recipe I came up with, based on *another* friend's version (which does not have the yam), so I would have something to feed her at parties. But it's honestly so good that I make it all the time just for myself.

You will need:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of butter
- 1 medium-sized sweet potato or American yam
- 3 small waxy potatoes, red, yellow, or white
- 1 yellow onion
- 1 tablespoon whole mustard seeds
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds (there goes my next drug test)
- 3 tablespoons mild yellow curry powder
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/4 tsp turmeric (if you have it.)
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 1 16-ounce can of whole tomatoes
- 1 cup dried lentils
- spinach, frozen or fresh
- yogurt for topping
- lime wedges
- salt, if needed

First, get your *[mise en place](https://www.livejournal.com/away?to=http%3A//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mise_en_place)* (https://www.livejournal.com/away?to=http%3A//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mise_en_place) going. Dice up the onion into 1/2 centimeter squares. Peel the sweet potato and dice it up in 1-centimeter chunks. Wash the regular potatoes and dice those too. I usually pick varieties where you can eat the

skins.

Set a *large* skillet or wok that you have a cover for on the stove and heat it. (I use a Calphalon "Everyday" pan.) Add oil and butter (the butter is for flavor; the oil is because it's better for you) and heat them over medium until the butter foams.

Add the poppy seeds and mustard seeds, shake, and cover. Keep shaking the pan until you smell something like popcorn steam, and hear popping. This means the mustard seeds have toasted enough to start exploding. At this point, turn the heat down slightly, uncover the pan, and add the other spices to the oil. Stir them long enough to toast the spices; you'll be able to tell by the smell when that happens. (caution: do not breathe in the cayenne pepper) You have to stand over it while this is happening, because nobody likes burned curry.

Once you have toasted curry spices, add your diced onion and stir it in. Turn the heat down to medium-low and keep stirring the onions until they start to soften. Then add the cubed potatoes, the canned tomatoes, the stock. When the sauce has come to a boil, sprinkle the lentils in and cover the skillet and walk away.

Come back every half an hour and check on it. You may need to add fluid: that's okay. You can use vegetable stock or water.

It's done when the potatoes and the lentils are soft, and that time will vary based on how old and stale your lentils are. At that point, take the cover off, and let any remaining liquid thicken. Taste it and see if it needs salt, which it probably only will if you used fresh tomatoes and home-made or unsalted chicken stock.

Add the spinach (optional) and re-cover long enough to melt or wilt it.

When the spinach has cooked, start dishing the curry out over rice or with tortillas (it makes good burritos) or whatever. Garnish with lime wedges, which you squeeze over the curry before you eat it, and yogurt, which you plop on top.

Substitutions:

If you eat meat, you can use chicken stock for this. You can use fresh tomatoes instead of canned. You can use any green leafy vegetable, or none at all, or peas.

This freezes well, so if you are not making it for a party or me, just

divvy it up into old deli containers and and pop them in the freezer for later. Around here, though, it never makes it to a third day, which is sad, because the flavors keep developing.

Failure modes:

You forgot it on the stove and burned something
You had the pan too hot when you put the spices in. Scorchy!
You were in a hurry and didn't let it cook long enough to soften the lentils. Ew, ick.

I would also like to say that I have the best co-workers ever, as every single one of them who is not out of town came in to work this morning to help wrangle these freaking homicide and accidental and natural death reports, spread out as they are over a four-state area.

And these are respectable-sized states.

TAGS: [curry](#), [recipes](#), [vegetarian](#)



[locked] [Dream Journal](#)

All right, unconscious mind. We're coming to an accommodation. If the dreams are you cleaning


[Elvis doesn't live here anymore.](#)


Hey there. Sorry about the drama. It was... it was an emotional decision, and I didn't

[Poppets.](#)
[Puppets.](#) [Poppet](#)
[puppets.](#) [Scary.](#)


28 comments


Deleted comment



 [cvillette](#)
[January 21 2008, 15:49:44 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

You're welcome! It's also dead easy.



 [kenne](#)
[January 21 2008, 15:54:01 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I wish more recipes included failure modes. You so rock.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 21 2008, 15:56:04 UTC](#)


[COLLAPSE](#)

blush

Or I screw up a lot.

Although you know, the failure mode on the brownie not-a-recipe turned out to be "Cake." Which is not so bad.



 [inaurolillium](#)


[January 21 2008, 18:29:44 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

All cooks screw up a lot. It's called "learning."

You know you've really made it when, seven times out of ten, you can spot the failures modes ahead of time, and the other three times, you rescue it and still get it made *on time* and *edible*.



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 21 2008, 16:19:51 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

When I made tentative "Thank you so much and why did you come in on a holiday?" noises at Mom, she replied, unsmiling, that she disapproved of celebrating Martin Luther King Day by having sales at shopping malls.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 21 2008, 16:20:54 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Mom. Rocks.



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 21 2008, 17:06:31 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

How did she wind up dodging the go? Cowboy pull geographical rank?




 [cvillette](#)

[January 21 2008, 17:08:32 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Dad decided to go his own self. Dunno why. Dadhunch? Dad not want paperwork?



 [ace_cub_reportr](#)

[January 21 2008, 17:07:39 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Stated for the record: the pizza burritos are a subtlety worthy of Morimoto.

I do not offer such prasie lightly.




 [cvillette](#)

[January 21 2008, 17:09:39 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Thank you.

I am so overwhelmed, I won't even make fun of your typing.



 [ace_cub_reportr](#)

[January 21 2008, 17:11:55 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

The amazing thing is that I do it all with just these two fingers....



 [exceptinsects](#)

[January 21 2008, 18:37:33 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Hm. Pizza...burritos?

I am intrigued. And slightly disturbed.

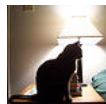


 [cvillette](#)

[January 21 2008, 18:40:08 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

tortilla filled with mozzarella, pizza sauce, roasted garlic, fresh basil, sundried tomatoes, caramelized onions, and pieces of meatball.

They came out okay.




 [txanne](#)

[January 21 2008, 23:49:05 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Aw, brilliant! I'm going to ~~steal~~ reinterpret the idea and make pizza enchiladas.



 [pnkrokhockeymom](#)

[January 21 2008, 21:47:14 UTC](#) Edited: [January 21 2008, 21:49:04 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)


Okay, thanks for posting this, and I have two questions.

First, for those of us who are maybe so easily distracted that we frequently burn things *even while we're standing over them*, and especially those of that little subset of US who are, maybe, deathly allergic to anything titled "failure mode," if your pan is the right amount of hot, how long does it generally take to toast some spices? (Oh, this subset of US, here, also, rarely cooks anything, really. The set equals "all overworked attorneys and hockey moms who have some lady cook us food and sell us the meals every week so our children don't live on Totino's." So if you could provide instruction in "Never Cooks Simplicity," you might end up worshiped).

Second, for those of us that like our food really, really spicy, would you suggest more cayenne or hotter curry? Or does this come out pretty spicy on its own?

I'm going to cook this. For Other People. It's so exciting!



 [cvillette](#)

[January 22 2008, 02:29:21 UTC](#)


[COLLAPSE](#)

This is mild, as written, and suitable for children and white people. So yes, more cayenne or hotter curry and more ginger will make it spicy.

And if you walk away from the spices in the pan, you **will** burn them. Period. You have to keep stirring them in the oil, and it only takes a few seconds for them to toast.

Let me know how it goes!



 [pnkrokhockeymom](#)

[January 22 2008, 02:47:07 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Well, we're all white, but only on the surface.

Which do you think is more flavorful: more cayenne, more ginger, or hotter curry? I'm thinking a subtle mixture of a and b.

I won't walk away. And now that I know it only takes "a few seconds," I won't even *THINK* away. Which is different, and more dangerous.

I'm going to take this to writer's group, which is Saturday, and I'll let you know.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 22 2008, 02:49:00 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Well, they're all flavorful, but they're different flavors. I'd go with the mix, myself.

I hope it works!



 [glinda_w](#)

[January 22 2008, 00:59:50 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Thank you for the recipe; I've been mildly jonesing for curry for the last few days, and will head out to the store tomorrow for missing ingredients (sweet potato and spinach). (Also need to get some good yoghurt; need starter for making my own.)

(Planned to go out today, but am in post-level-8-migraine-day crash state. **growls at inadequate body/health**)
(**wanders off, babbling**)



 [cvillette](#)


[January 22 2008, 02:40:05 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, sympathy on the migraine. I haven't had one in years, but I used to get them in high school.

I remember them very very very clearly.

You can make it without the sweet potato, too, by the way.

 [glinda_w](#)

[January 22 2008, 02:50:22 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Thanks for the sympathy; I swear, no one who hasn't had one understands just how nasty they are. (Chronic, daily, intractable, result of CFS & fibro. Hate my body. Hate hate hate.)

And I *like* sweet potato. A lot. So will wait until I have some to make the curry. (I might skip the spinach, or not, but mmmmmmm sweet potato. One of my favorite Japanese restaurants used to do a tempura veggie mix with sweet potato a main ingredient. Yum.)



 [cvillette](#)

[January 22 2008, 02:53:29 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, sweet potato tempura is *crack*. I need to learn how to do good tempura, but I think if I tried deep frying in my kitchen, somebody would die. (all the stove burners are on a 20 degree angle.)

Chronic illness sucks.



 [inaurolillium](#)

[January 22 2008, 11:03:42 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I suggest buying a wok with a ring, which will help you stabilize it over tippy burners -- even if it does provide less direct heat with electric.

And the next time I turn up my notebook from my Asian Cuisine class, I'll dig out the tempura recipe for you. I seriously need to practice it, as mine came out a bit tough. You can't stir the batter hardly at all, and it has ice cubes in it.

Also, do you ever make pasta from scratch?



 [cvillette](#)

[January 22 2008, 12:52:17 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I only make pasta from scratch when I'm cooking for girls.

Not that I would ever show off or anything. Nuh uh.

I would deeply appreciate your tempura recipe.

The wok trick is not a bad one, and I could use a real wok (I have a slope-sided skillet and I have the electric wok from college. Hey, I could probably put the electric wok on the table with something fireproof underneath...), but I am going to need a storage unit for my kitchen equipment soon as it is.


 [glinda_w](#)

[January 23 2008, 02:47:29 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I'd like the tempura recipe, also.


Suggestions on the sloping burners (!!) - do you have level counterspace? I've got an old (well, mid-'80s) combination crock-pot and nonstick-lined electric thingy; it holds a gallon of cider if I'm doing mulled cider, and is just the most useful thing after the old (my parents found it in a cupboard when they bought the house in 1945) cast-iron skillet. Or, get an electric burner thingy (hotplate?) and use that on the counter.

20 degree slope on burners? And you can cook on that? Color me seriously impressed :)

 [cvillette](#)
[January 23 2008, 02:53:35 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I may overstate the case *slightly*. ;-)

The entire kitchen is a bit off-kilter. And when I say I don't have room for any more kitchen equipment, I mean I don't have room for any more kitchen equipment.

 [glinda_w](#)
[January 23 2008, 03:58:28 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)


</i>And when I say I don't have room for any more kitchen equipment, I mean I don't have room for any more kitchen equipment.</i>

Heh. I know that one too well. This is either a very small one-bedroom apt. or a large-ish studio, with a corner of the main area being the kitchen. And the microwave, mixer, processor (when I get a working one again), coffee grinder, toaster, and rice cooker *have* to be out. About 20" of counter space to the right of the sink (for the dish drainer), about the same to the left before it meets the stove at the corner.

I'm not really complaining, though - after a year in the shelter and three years in the shared-kitchen SRO, this is fine. I've even managed canning. (The curry is cooking now; substituted turkey stock 'cause, well, there are these pint jars thereof from a Thanksgiving turkey...)

(And oh ghods it smelled *heavenly* when I added the rest of the spices, and then the onion.)

(I'm going to need a "nom nom nom" icon, I suspect...)

 [cvillette](#)
[January 23 2008, 04:04:03 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Aww. This is my first kitchen of my very own.

I whine. But it's the kind of friendly complaining you do when you've got a working relationship and you've accepted that no matter how much they bug you, some things

that just aren't worth breaking up over are never going to change.

I hope you like the curry.

[locked] Dream Journal

All right, unconscious mind. We're coming to an accommodation. If the dreams are you cleaning

Elvis doesn't live here anymore.

Hey there. Sorry about the drama. It was... it was an emotional decision, and I didn't

Poppets.

Puppets. Poppet

puppets. Scary.